

Sin that thou sleest so fele in sondry wyse
Hyens hir wil, unpreyed, day and night,
Do me, at my requeste, this servyse,
Delivere now the world, so dostow right,
Of me, that am the wofulleste wight
That ever was; for tyme is that I sterve,
Sin in this world of right nought may I serve.

¶ This Troilus in teres gan distille,
As licour out of alamyk ful faste;
And Pandarus gan holde his tunge stille,
And to the ground his eyen down he caste.
But natheles, thus thought he at the laste:
What, parde, rather than my felawe deye,
Yet shal I somewhat more unto him seye.

And seyde: freend, sin thou hast swich distresse,
And sin thee list myn arguments to blame,
Why nilt thyselfen helpen doon redresse,
And with thy manhod letten at this grame?
Go ravisshe hir ne canstow not for shame!
And outhur lat hir out of toun fare,
Or hold hir stille, and leve thy nyce fare.

Artow in Troye, and hast non hardiment
To take a womman which that loveth thee,
And wolde hirselves been of thyn assent?
Now is not this a nyce vanitee?
Rys up anon, and lat this weping be,
And kyth thou art a man, for in this houre
I wil be deed, or she shal bleven oure.

¶ To this answerde him Troilus ful softe,
And seyde: Parde, leve brother dere,
Al this have I myself yet thought ful ofte,
And more thing than thou devysest here.
But why this thing is laft, thou shalt wel here;
And whan thou me hast yeve an audience,
Therafter mayst thou telle al thy sentence.

first, sin thou wost this toun hath al this werre
for ravissing of wommen so by might,
It sholde not be suffred me to erre,
As it stant now, ne doon so gret unright.
I sholde han also blame of every wight,
My fadres graunt if that I so withstode,
Sin she is chaunged for the tounes goode.

I have eek thought, so it were hir assent,
To aske hir at my fader, of his grace;
Chan thenke I, this were hir accusment,
Sin wel I woot I may hir not purchase.
for sin my fader, in so heigh a place
As parlement, hath hir eschaunge enseled,
He nil for me his lettre be repeled.

Yet drede I most hir herte to pertourbe
With violence, if I do swich a game;
for if I wolde it openly distourbe,
It moste been disclaundre to hir name.
And me were lever deed than hir defame,
As nolde God but if I sholde have
Hir honour lever than my lyf to save!

Thus am I lost, for ought that I can see;
for certeyn is, sin that I am hir knight,
I moste hir honour lever han than me
In every cas, as love oughte of right.
Thus am I with desyr and reson twight;
Desyr for to distourben hir me redeth,
And reson nil not, so myn herte dredeth.

¶ Thus wepinge that he coude never cesse,
He seyde: Allas! how shal I, wrecche, fare?
for wel fele I alwey my love encesse,
And hope is lasse and lasse alwey, Pandare!
Encressen eek the causes of my care;
So welaway, why nil myn herte breste?
for, as in love, ther is but litel reste.

¶ Pandare answerde: freend, thou mayst, for me,
Don as thee list; but hadde ich it so hote,
And thyn estat, she sholde go with me;
Though al this toun cryede on this thing by note,
I nolde sette at al that noyse a grote.
for when men han wel cryed, than wol they roun;
A wonder last but nyne night never in toun.

Devyne not in reson ay so depe
Ne curteysly, but help thyself anon;
Bet is that othere than thyselfen wepe,
And namely, sin ye two been al oon.
Rys up, for by myn heed, she shal not goon;
And rather be in blame a lyte yfounde
Than sterve here as a gnat, withoute wounde.

It is no shame unto yow, ne no vyce
Hir to withholden, that ye loveth most.
Paraunter, she mighte holden thee for nyce
To lete hir go thus to the Grekes ost.
Chenck eek fortune, as wel thyselfen wost,
Helpeth an hardy man to his emprise,
And weyveth wrecches, for hir cowardyse.

And though thy lady wolde a litel hir greve,
Thou shalt thy pees ful wel hereafter make,
But as for me, certayn, I can not leve
That she wolde it as now for yvel take.
Why sholde than for ferd thyn herte quake?
Chenck eek how Paris bath, that is thy brother,
A love; and why shaltow not have another?

And Troilus, o thing I dar thee swere,
That if Criseyde, whiche that is thy leef,
Now loveth thee as wel as thou dost here,
God helpe me so, she nil not take agreef.
Though thou do bote anon in this mischeef.
And if she wilneth fro thee for to passe,
Channe is she fals; so love hir wel the lasse.

forthy tak herte, and thenk, right as a knight,
Though love is broken alday every lawe.
Kyth now sumwhat thy corage and thy might,
Have mercy on thyself, for any awe.
Lat not this wrecched wo thin herte gnawe,
But manly set the world on size and sevene;
And, if thou deye a martir, go to hevenc.

I wol myself be with thee at this dede,
Though ich and al my kin, upon a stounde,
Shulle in a strete as dogges ligen dede,
Though girt with many a wyd & bloody wounde.
In every cas I wol a freend be founde.
And if thee list here sterven as a wrecche,
Adieu, the devel spede him that it recche!

¶ This Troilus gan with tho wordes quiken,
And seyde: freend, graunt mercy, ich assente;
But certaynly thou mayst not me so priken,
Ne peyne noon ne may me so tormente,
That, for no cas, it is not myn entente,
At shorte wordes, though I dyen sholde,
To ravisshe hir, but if himself it wolde.

¶ Why, so mene I, quod Pandarus, al this day,
But tel me than, hastow hir wel assayed,
That sorwest thus? And he answerde: Nay.
¶ Wherof artow, quod Pandare, than amayed,
That not not that she wol ben yvel apayed,
To ravisshe hir, sin thou hast not ben there,
But if that Jove tolde it in thyn ere?

forthy rys up, as nought ne were, anon,
And wash thy face, and to the king thou wende,
Or he may wondren whider thou art goon.
Thou most with wisdom him and othere blende;
Or, upon cas, he may after thee sende
Er thou be war; and shortly, brother dere,
Be glad, and lat me werke in this matere.

for I shal shape it so, that sikerly
Thou shalt this night som tyme, in som manere,
Com speke with thy lady prevely,
And by hir wordes eek, and by hir chere,
Thou shalt ful sone aparceyve and wel here
Al hir entente, and in this cas the beste;
And fare now wel, for in this point I reste.

¶ The swifte fame, whiche that false thinges
Egal reporteth lyk the thinges trewe,
Was thoroughout Troye yfled with preste winges
fro man to man, and made this tale al newe,
How Calcas doughter, with hir brighte hewe,
At parlement, withoute wordes more,
Lgraunted was in chaunge of Antenore.

The whiche tale anon right as Criseyde
Had herd, she which that of hir fader roughte,
As in this cas, right nought, ne whanne he deyde,
ful bisily to Juppiter bisoughte
Yeve him mischaunce that this tretis broughte.
But shortly, lest thise tales sothe were,
She dorste at no wight asken it, for fere.

As she that hadde hir herte and al hir minde
On Troilus yset so wonder faste,
That al this world ne mighte hir love unbinde,
Ne Troilus out of hir herte caste;
She wol ben his, whyl that hir lyf may laste.
And thus she brenneth bothe in love and drede,
So that she niste what was best to rede.

But as men seen in toun, and al aboute,
That wommen usen frendes to visyte,
So to Criseyde of wommen com a route
for pitous joye, and wenden hir delyte;
And with hir tales, dere ynough a myte,
These wommen, whiche that in the cite dwelle,
They sette hem down, and seyde as I shal telle.

Quod first that oon: I am glad, trewely,
Bycause of yow, that shal your fader see.
¶ Another seyde: Ywis, so nam not I;
for al to litel hath she with us be.
¶ Quod tho the thridde: I hope, ywis, that she
Shal bringen us the pees on every syde,
That, whan she gooth, almighty God hir gyde!

¶ Tho wordes and tho wommannisshe thinges,
She herde hem right as though she thennes were;
for, God it wot, hir herte on other thing is,
Although the body sat among hem there.
Hir advertence is alwey elleswhere;
for Troilus ful faste hir soule soughte;
Withouten word, alwey on him she thoughte.

Thise wommen, that thus wenden hir to plesse,
Aboute nought gonne alle hir tales spende;
Swich vanitee ne can don hir non ese,
As she that, al this mene whyle, brende
Of other passiou than that they wende,
So that she felte almost hir herte dye
for wo, and wery of that companye.

for which no lenger mighte she restreine
Hir teres, so they gonnen up to welle,
That even signes of the bitter peyne
In whiche hir spirit was, and moste dwelle;
Remembring hir, fro heven unto which helle
She fallen was, sith she forgoth the sighte
Of Troilus, and sorowfully she sighte.

And thilke foles sittinge hir aboute
Wenden, that she so wepte and syked sore
Bycause that she sholde out of that route
Depart, and never pleye with hem more.
And they that hadde yknowen hir of yore
Seye hir so wepe, and thoughte it kindenesse,
And eche of hem wepte eek for hir distresse;

And bisily they gonnen hir conforten
Of thing, God wot, on which she litel thoughte;
And with hir tales wenden hir disporten,
And to be glad they often hir bisoughte.
But swich an ese therwith they hir wroughte
Right as a man is esed for to fele,
for ache of heed, to clawen him on his hele!

But after al this nyce vanitee
They took hir leve, and hoom they wenten alle.
Criseyde, ful of sorweful pitee,
Into hir chaumbre up wente out of the halle,
And on hir bed she gan for deed to falle.
In purpos never thennes for to ryse;
And thus she wroughte, as I shal yow devyse.